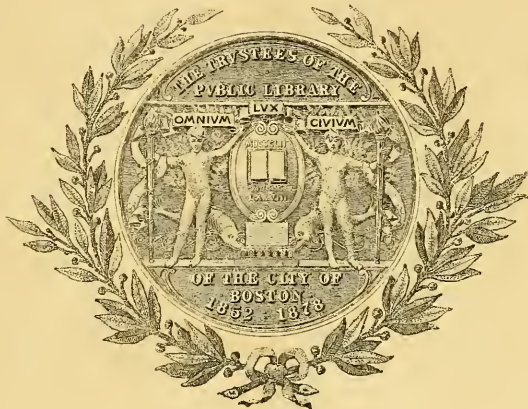




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OUR NATIONAL DANGERS, REAL AND
UNREAL

AN ORATION

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DELIVERED BEFORE THE HARVARD CHAPTER OF THE
PHI BETA KAPPA

In Sanders Theatre, Thursday, June 29, 1899

BY

CHARLES J. BONAPARTE

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James M. Barnard,
Nov. 27, 1901.

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OUR NATIONAL DANGERS, REAL AND UNREAL.

ORATION DELIVERED IN SANDERS THEATRE, BEFORE THE HARVARD
CHAPTER OF PHI BETA KAPPA, THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 1899.

LESS than half a year's space separates us to-day from the one hundredth anniversary of Washington's death. Of the great services of that great man to his and our country, I deem none greater than the wise counsel of his Farewell Address. There may be, it would seem that there are, some among us who think this out of date and believe themselves qualified to furnish a substitute. I do not pause to compare such men with its author, or to speculate whether any one of them will live in the memory of his countrymen a hundred days after his body shall be laid in the grave; I content myself with saying that I do not agree with them. In the Farewell Address we are reminded that "in proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened." Of no government is this more eminently characteristic than of that which Washington, perhaps more than any other man, aided to frame for the nation to which he, certainly more than any other man, gave being. I may, then, claim the warrant of his authority when I ask of this old and honored learned society, as the fulfilment of a patriotic duty, its aid in enlightening public opinion at a moment when our government must deal with new and grave problems, when our country is threatened by new and grave dangers.

These dangers are in no small measure the penalties for our neglect of Washington's warnings. He tells us: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion

and morality are indispensable supports. . . . The mere politician equally with the pious man ought to respect and cherish them." In these latter days we have listened patiently, if not with approval, to those who declared that "the purification of politics is an iridescent dream. The Decalogue and the Golden Rule have no place in a political campaign." What is worse, we have suffered such things in our government as gave to their words no little semblance of truth. He warns us, "in the most solemn manner, against the baneful effect of the spirit of party. . . . It exists under different shapes in all governments, . . . but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy. . . . The common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it. . . . A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame." To this advice we now prefer a doctrine preached by the thousands of politicians and the hundreds of newspapers who tell us daily that to attain party success, to perfect party organization, to strengthen party discipline, good citizens should give their votes to unworthy candidates; support policies they believe disastrous; see with complacency, or at least with resignation, the public service used to furnish bribes or rewards for partisan service, and admit that every office, however responsible or however humble, that of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or that of a village lamplighter, shall be filled in the interest and at the dictation of that very "spirit of party" which it is "the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain." He deems it most important "that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those intrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another." Would one who thus wrote, think ye, see with contentment senators and representatives dividing among themselves, not only with impunity, but almost as a matter of unquestioned prerogative, thousands of appointments committed to his successor in the Presidency, as part of that "office of President of the United States" which the latter has "solemnly sworn" to "faithfully execute," by the express words of that Constitution which he has likewise sworn to "preserve, protect, and defend"?

Finally, Washington affirms that "virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government." We have abandoned the government he founded to the Boss and the Ring. These powers of darkness would have men ignorant and vicious, pressed by want and rebellious to law, because of such men they make their dupes and tools. They are the common enemies of all who war against sin and suffering, for amid a people happy through righteousness they could not live. They protect and foster every degrading pursuit, every noxious industry, every dangerous and shameful calling, as training-schools for their followers and resources for their fisc. We know them and their works, yet we endure them as our rulers, and we have endured them for many weary years: it is as true now as it was when Burke said it, that "there never was *long* a corrupt government of a virtuous people."

Had we, however, proved mindful of Washington's words, we must yet have now encountered new perils and undertaken new tasks. The Farewell Address says: "Europe . . . must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. . . . Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. . . . Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground?" Fortunately or unfortunately, as it may seem to different minds, but, in either event, certainly, our situation is no longer "detached and distant." Mount Vernon is nearer, for any purpose, to London or Paris or Berlin to-day than it was to Cambridge when these words were written: for some purposes it is nearer to Pekin or Calcutta or Cape Town. We can hardly realize how vast a change has been made in our relations to men of other lands by submarine cables: when the newspapers began to place beside our breakfast plates daily epitomes of the world's history for each yesterday, the area of our attention and sympathy was more widely expanded than it would be if a telescope were constructed many thousandfold stronger than any yet known, through which astronomers could contemplate the good or ill fortunes of intelligent beings on our sister planets; the causes of European, even of Asiatic or African, controversies are not always now, in future they may be seldom, "essentially foreign to our concerns." Moreover, it should not be, although it often is, forgotten that, in a military sense, our isola-

tion is already a thing of the past. With our shores but six days' space from the harbors of the Old World, the transportation hither of an army larger than Washington ever commanded, even on paper, would be a less task for the navy and mercantile marine of any one of several among the Great Powers than was that of General Ross's brigade in 1814. Washington looked for a time "when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel." That time came, but there is reason to ask whether it has not also gone, for the greatest change of all in our situation is that we have become an object of fear. This is a change of but yesterday. Our prodigious growth, our immense resources, were indeed known abroad, but few foreigners had ever thought of the infant giant as a conqueror, or even as an enemy. To this possibility the booming of Dewey's guns awakened the world, and their answer throughout Continental Europe and Spanish America was a growl of popular hatred imperfectly smothered by diplomacy. These wrathful mutterings were not prompted, they were even, so far as might be, stifled by foreign governments; but, for thoughtful Americans, this made them but the graver symptom of a national danger: a nation dreaded, and therefore hated, from the heart by surrounding peoples, however sincerely pacific its purposes, is condemned to sleep on its arms.

We cannot escape perils by ignoring them. The pilgrims in the "Vision of Theodore," who had been gathering flowers under the protection of Innocence, were by no means happy when that gentle guardian soon left them to toil up the Mountain of Existence under sterner guides and by rough and narrow paths. "Some went back to the first part of the Mountain, and seemed desirous of continuing busied in plucking flowers, but they were no longer guarded by Innocence;" and it fared ill with them. I am as far apart as any one can be from those "statesmen" who would attest and celebrate our national maturity by an uproarious display of national vanity and folly, much like a boy who smokes and gets tight to show that he is a man: but our national maturity has come, and with it, in a material sense, national greatness; and although we may determine in some measure *how* we shall meet the attendant dangers, we cannot choose *not* to meet them. The question is not now whether we would have them come sooner or later; such was the question before us eighteen months ago, and

I, at least, was fully prepared to answer with Lord Wellington then, "I prefer them later." But to-day they are here: we can no more dissipate them by shutting our eyes than the ostrich eludes its enemy when it buries its head in the sand. As Moses to Joshua, let us then say: "Be strong and of a good courage; fear not, nor be afraid of them;" and to these ends let us calmly and truthfully tell ourselves what they are.

However great my regard for them, I see a serious danger in the presence among us of many philanthropists, humanitarians, and social reformers, eminently well-meaning and generally intelligent people, but to whom could be appropriately addressed Saint Paul's words to the Thessalonians: "We beseech ye, brethren, . . . that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business." I would not be misunderstood as to this class of persons: I do not say that the country would be better off if we had n't them; on the contrary, I think them a meritorious and a valuable element in the community; the good they do outweighs the risks they cause, but these are grave risks, and we should guard against them. The citizens I have in mind, of all things, like least "to be quiet and to do their own business," or, at all events, to admit that anything can happen anywhere which is not their business. They are always in a state of ebullient sympathy with reported wrong or suffering in whatever out-of-the-way place rumor may locate it, and always ready to tell foreign rulers how to do what is undeniably *their* business,—the Czar how to deal with Siberia or Finland, the Sultan and the Powers how to pacify Armenia or Crete, South American republics how to secure liberty of conscience, Italians how to quell bread riots, Englishmen how to treat the Mahdi's tomb,—and are angry when these will not hear.

I have read many descriptions and criticisms of our country and people by foreigners, often carefully, even elaborately, prepared by men of marked ability and learning; in all, without exception, I have detected, or supposed that I detected, notable misapprehensions of fact and consequent errors in reasoning: I always hesitate therefore to express, or even form, decided opinions respecting the problems which may confront public men in other lands, and especially to pronounce sweeping and uncharitable condemnations on their supposed shortcomings. But no suspicion that their zeal may not be according to knowledge ever seems to

trouble the good men and women to whom I have referred ; they enjoy, apparently, a boundless and invincible confidence in their own omniscience : —

“ I number the sands ; I measure the sea ;
What’s hidden to others is known to me ; ”

and they express themselves with corresponding assurance and emphasis.

It might be a matter of little moment what such people said and did were the world, or even the United States, peopled by philosophers or saints : unfortunately our nation and the nations around us are as yet, and probably will continue to be, made up of very human men ; and while this remains true, those who thus awaken angry passions and inflame bitter prejudices play with fire. The consequences of their activity may be vastly more far-reaching than they themselves propose, — may be even the very opposite of their wishes. To turn again to the Farewell Address : “ Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill-will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy.” In the last few words is suggested the momentous query, How far can our public men be trusted to resist and turn back a tide of misguided popular sentiment setting strongly towards a needless war, “ contrary to the best calculations of policy ? ” It must be admitted that in one respect they are well qualified for the duty : an American politician repeats with such parrot-like fidelity and assiduity his party’s shibboleth, whatever this may be, that he may half persuade himself he believes it ; but beyond this he has no opinions, and since he considers all enthusiasm no less factitious, and all professions no less insincere than he knows his own to be, he is protected from the contagion of a visionary fanaticism. With a government made up of such men that risk is not imminent to which Washington alludes in saying : “ The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject.” But there is a far greater, indeed a very great,

danger that in such a case American politicians may sacrifice their country's prosperity and safety, not, indeed, to their passions, but to their real or supposed selfish interests. With some honorable exceptions, which do but prove the rule, our present public men are profoundly indifferent to the prosperity, the dignity, the safety of the country they govern; too many members of our federal legislature might ask with astonishment, "What are we here for?" should any one suggest that they give time or thought to questions of diplomacy or national defense, or, indeed, to anything beside office-mongering and vote-hunting. Their hearts and lives are given up to the noble work of quartering for support on the taxpayers as many as possible of their relatives and dependents and political henchmen, preferably such of these as may be too stupid or lazy or vicious to make a living for themselves; to any other task, unless perhaps it be electioneering to retain their own places, they can give but the leavings of their time and the dregs of their energy. Moreover, they are notoriously incompetent to gauge public opinion, and peculiarly clumsy and unlucky in their efforts to forecast a popular verdict. The blunders made by some of the most prominent among them as to the results of impending elections (a subject on which, of all others, they might be supposed entitled to speak with authority) have been so gross and frequent of late years as to seem at once incredible and incomprehensible to observers who know public men in other countries, or knew our public men in other days. As a consequence, not only do they never dream of resisting a genuine though mistaken and mischievous popular clamor, but, as the old lady thought her pastor must have mistaken "some other loud noise" for his divine call to the ministry, however closely they glue their ears to the telephone to catch an inkling of the people's wishes, it is even chances or less that they can make these out. For the cackling of geese may make a loud noise; a crowd of idlers may be easily gathered in stirring times to stare at a noted person, and what a casual crowd will shout for is in great measure matter of chance at best, and may be readily determined by artifice. It ought to be, but I do not think it, incredible that a resolution of Congress actually or virtually declaring war may be one day signed by a President who himself believes war "contrary to the best calculations of policy" for this country, but has been led to think it also,

and perhaps to think it falsely, necessary or advisable to assure his party's victory at the polls, possibly to assure his own reëlection to office.

I say this, fully recognizing the moral obliquity involved in his act. A heavier weight could hardly rest on any man's conscience, a more formidable indictment could hardly await any man at the bar of history, than must fall to the lot of one who knows he has bartered the lives of his fellow-countrymen, the security of his country, the peace of the world, for partisan advantage to gratify personal ambition. Washington may have reasonably believed that no man capable of such conduct would ever sit in the chair he first filled; for us, this belief is to my mind no longer reasonable.

The national danger lurking in the degeneracy of our public men may become yet more manifest after war has become a fact. Treason in such form as Benedict Arnold's is too unusual to be greatly feared, but a failure in official duty which would differ from it morally less in kind than in degree is, to say the least, by no means inconceivable. Can we be assured that some future President will not "give aid and comfort" to the public enemy by placing or retaining in some position of the highest responsibility, even as the administrative head of the army itself, some influential politician grossly and notoriously unfit to be thus employed? And if this be possible, is it any the less possible that at critical times high military command may be unworthily held as the fruit of political intrigue or personal favoritism? May it not happen that our soldiers shall be shamefully neglected, that recognized abuses shall remain without remedy, that detected misconduct shall be condoned, because to right these wrongs may be, or may be thought, "bad politics"? Painful as is this odious picture, even to the imagination, we must endure its contemplation if we would do our part, as good citizens, as honest men, to make certain that our country shall never hereafter offer it to a disgusted world.

To some of my hearers the thought may occur that for these evils and indeed for all those springing from warfare, an obvious and sufficient safeguard is a policy of peace, and that scandals in the organization or administration of our army would be surely avoided had we no army at all; they, and perchance others not

quite so trenchant in their views, may also see in "militarism" one of the gravest of those impending dangers now overshadowing the United States. The suggestion that we escape abuses in our army by disbanding it seems to me like telling a dyspeptic that nothing he eats will disagree with him if he eats nothing. I can indeed conceive of a world wherein there should be no need of soldiers, as I can conceive of one wherein policemen and jailers and executioners, judges and lawyers, physicians and nurses, would be likewise superfluous; but it is not the world I live in, and I gravely doubt whether it would be a world for the habitation of men. With all my heart I echo the words of the Farewell Address: "Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all: religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it?" But the great writer tells us to do these things, "taking care always to keep ourselves by suitable establishments on a respectable defensive posture," and "remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it." I have already said that I think the time has passed when we could rely with reasonable confidence upon our isolation as a sufficient protection; the time has also passed when we could avoid the responsibilities, the enmities, the perils incident to our national strength: that such are the facts is certainly no cause for vainglorious rejoicing, but, on the other hand, the facts should be resolutely accepted: we may regret past days, but it were unworthy to whimper over them, and foolish to strive to doubt that they are beyond recall: "suitable establishments" sustained by "timely disbursements" we must have; not only to maintain "a respectable defensive posture," and "prepare for danger" inseparable from our prospective, indeed our present, position as one of the world's great powers, but also that we may, in case of need, "choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel:" does this necessity involve any real danger from "militarism"?

What is "militarism"? The word is English, if it be English at all, only by recent naturalization, and the thing is no less familiar than distasteful to the English-speaking folk. It is often loosely used as though it signified a martial spirit, a popular interest in military matters, or a general readiness throughout the

people to accept with alacrity a soldier's duties : as a matter of fact, if employed with any accuracy, it denotes very nearly the reverse of all these things ; speaking broadly, we may say that a nation almost inevitably becomes less warlike as it becomes more " militaristic," if a barbarous word may be coined for the occasion. No monarch of modern times was so essentially and thoroughly a crowned drill-sergeant as Frederick I of Prussia ; in him militarism amounted, not merely to a passion, but to a mania ; yet he was also one of the most pacific of sovereigns. His reign illustrated the saying attributed to the Grand Duke Constantine, a prince and soldier of somewhat the same type, that he " hated war because it spoiled the troops." In a healthy state of public opinion, the army is a mere living weapon : it stands to the nation as a horse to its rider ; it asks, with the mute eloquence of obvious justice and humanity, that its toil and blood be not wasted ; no right-thinking man can hear without indignation of faithful soldiers uselessly sacrificed in worse than useless enterprises ; but, after all, it is, as is the horse, a thing to spend and to be spent ; if it must be ridden to death in its master's service, to the death it obeys the spur. When, however, the means becomes an end ; when the welfare of the instrument is allowed to weigh against, even to outweigh, that of the owner ; when, in other words, the army grows, or rather decays, into something indulged and pampered and finally feared ; when its selfish interests are consulted, its prejudices are inflamed, its passions are gratified at the country's cost, — we have " militarism," and unless some source of national regeneration be found, we are fairly on the highroad to a military tyranny. In this wretched system one finds all that is small, paltry, harmful in military life, its frippery, its pedantry, its petty abuses of authority, its callousness to suffering, its indifference to rights, but less and ever less, as the miserable order endures, of its heroism in obedience, of the noble humility of its self-surrender ; as the civic virtues die out in the people, the military virtues die out in the army ; and when the latter has become all-powerful in the state, for its proper work it is almost invariably worthless. Rome under the Praetorians, the days of *pronunciamiento* in Spanish America, have furnished pictures, Haïti has furnished the caricature, of a people and an army alike the prey of militarism developed into military despotism.

Once, and once only, have people of English speech been subject for a few years to the yoke of their own army: the Protectorate of Cromwell was a period of prosperity at home, of victory abroad; the ruler was an extraordinary man, the army which sustained his rule was a yet more extraordinary army; nevertheless, so hostile to the habits, the temperament, the traditions of the people, was the virtual though disguised reign of the sword, that the man of genius who upheld it was hardly cold in his grave before the entire nation had called back from exile a frivolous, selfish, and dissolute prince, and welcomed him enthusiastically to the throne as deliverer from a seemingly intolerable bondage. To my mind, there is little fear lest their children by blood or adoption, on either side of the Atlantic, shall ever feel or act otherwise. For his countrymen at least, Byron had no cause to dread

“That spell upon the minds of men
Which led them to adore
Those pagod things of sabre sway
With fronts of brass and feet of clay.”

On the other hand, in the readiness with which, a year since, so many thousands of our young men left their homes for a war whereof many, probably most, of them regretted the outbreak and doubted the need, I saw, and still see, a great cause for encouragement. It proved that they remembered a truth some older men have appeared since then inclined to forget, namely, that the duties of a good citizen in time of war in no wise depend on his opinion regarding the merits of the controversy which has ended in war or the necessity or expediency of the conflict, — that a man who thought the late war a criminal folly was under precisely the same obligation to enlist as one who thought it a noble crusade in the cause of enlightenment and humanity. In every community there must evidently be some authority which shall finally determine all questions of international relations, and, in last resort, the momentous question of peace or war. By our Constitution, this latter power is intrusted to Congress; it may have been in this instance exercised wisely or foolishly, from good motives or from bad; but when it had been exercised, whatever each of us might think of the decision or of those who made it, that decision fixed the duty of every American citizen. He had no more right to refuse his

aid in giving it effect because he questioned its rightfulness than a sheriff or a jailer would have to release a prisoner whom he believed to have been unjustly convicted by a stupid or prejudiced, or even by a bribed, jury. For any nation to permit each one of its subjects to decide such questions for himself and act on his decision would be suicidal, and no nation does this: the nearest approach to such legalized anarchy known to history was furnished by the *liberum veto* and "Confederations" of Poland, and there such institutions bore their legitimate fruit. When Stephen Decatur gave the sentiment, "Our country, right or wrong," he used words unfortunately liable to serious misconstruction, but which, in the sense he unquestionably ascribed to them, express a most significant truth. It is not true that a good man will promote his country's prosperity *per fas aut nefas*; it is not true that, in international or any other human relations, "Might is right and conscience nought but fear;" but it is true, and of vital moment to be owned as truth, that the grave responsibilities for what must follow an appeal to arms rest wholly on the country's statesmen, and in no wise on her soldiers. Our young men remembered also that, in law and conscience, every American citizen is always a soldier in reserve: the duties of a soldier rest upon him in time of war, even, if need be, in time of peace as well, not by his special choice, but as a result of birth or residence, as a return for the privilege of citizenship and the protection of the laws; and although, under the circumstances then existing, the question whether each one of them should assume the active discharge of those duties was wisely left, in the first instance, to his own election, it was well for them and for the country that so many chose as they did. After all has been said, at the Hague or elsewhere, as to the wickedness of warfare, Washington's profession can hardly be one unbecoming a civilized or a Christian man, or one to be shunned by an American. A Byzantine of the Lower Empire, an Italian of the Renaissance, may have regarded soldiers and their work with a large measure of unaffected disgust and contempt, but those were not times and countries in which were developed high and sound types of human character. That nation is diseased which answers a call to arms sluggishly and with reluctance.

I am even prepared to find some compensation for the sacrifices

made inevitable by the no less inevitable dangers of our new position in the vivid consciousness of national existence, in the antidote to partisan and sectional prejudices and to enmities of class or race or creed, which will be furnished by some experience of military life common to the entire country. In war time it may be true of a self-governing people

“That none are for a party, but all are for the state ;

That the great man loves the poor man, and the poor man loves the great.”

Comrades on the firing line will never be truly strangers. No one knew better than Washington that it was the Revolution's baptism of blood which made Americans really a nation. He tells them : “You have, in a common cause, fought and triumphed together ; the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint counsels and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.” There is the less reason to regret the increased interest in matters pertaining to the national defense, awakened by the war, among our people, because Congress had so long, so culpably, and so grievously failed to make for this any reasonable provision whatever. When Washington, in the words I have quoted, declared a respectable military establishment necessary to the safety and dignity of the nation, he did not doubtless expect or desire our army ever to rival those maintained to-day by Russia, Germany, or France, Austria or Italy, or even England ; he might have been content with but a fraction of the force deemed needful by such powers as Spain, Turkey, and Japan : but he could have hardly imagined that a time would come when the United States could boast of seventy millions of inhabitants, and an area as large as Europe, and yet rest satisfied with an “establishment” immeasurably weaker than that of Holland or of Portugal, of Sweden or of Switzerland ; yet such was the sober fact when Congress declared the recent war. Our regular army consisted of barely 27,000 troops, scattered all over a vast continent, and even these, as the event soon made painfully apparent, were altogether unprepared for the field. Beside this, we had about 105,000 organized militia, not subject as a body to federal authority, and neither intended nor fit for active, and especially for foreign, service : this force was completely disorganized and well-nigh destroyed by its use as the nucleus for an army of invasion. With

an improvidence and levity which would be incredible had not our eyes witnessed their exhibition, Congress actually rushed into a war of aggression with nothing which could be called, by the widest stretch of imagination or courtesy, "an army" at its command. We may well be devoutly thankful that the weakness of our enemy gave us then the precious time we so sorely needed, but we should remember that Providence may not send us *two* such warnings.

The vital danger, however, lies rather in possible fruits of victory than in any ills to flow from defeat. The corruption and incapacity of our politicians in high office, their negligence in preparation, recklessness in provocation, unblushing readiness ever to sacrifice their country's interests to their own, may expose us to humiliating disasters and grievous losses; but, in my belief, no *foreign* foe will imperil our national unity or orderly freedom: these were so won and so saved for us that only our own vices can destroy them: the tablets on yonder walls are warrants to assure them from domestic revolt or outward violence, while a nation worthy to live shall live to defend them.

"By our children's golden future,
By our fathers' stainless shield,
That which God and heroes left us
We shall never, never yield!"

But will that escutcheon remain untarnished, will that future be still unclouded, if the sordid vices of our political life are allowed to spread with all the rank luxuriance of noxious weeds in the abuses of some vast vassal empire which we may hold by the sword? Imagine the dumb, helpless millions of the East, the passive prey for ages of rapacity and oppression, at the mercy of proconsuls chosen among the bosses of our cities and States; picture to yourselves these vulgar tyrants employing the treasures which their shameless greed has amassed abroad to further debauch our politics, to further degrade our government: think of these things as possible, nay, as not unlikely, and I do not say tremble at the thought, but let it banish any levity and any presumption.

I know there are those who hope to find a remedy in the very gravity of the threatened evils; who tell us Civil Service Reform came from Calcutta to London, and look for good government and

pure politics to come from Manila to New York. God grant, in His Mercy, which has been so often and so signally shown us, which we have so ill deserved, that these may prove true prophets! But did any such passengers ever cross the seas from Manila to Madrid? And at Manila we are but on the threshold of our threatening destiny. Our optimists tell us also, when a great burden seems about to be laid upon him, a brave man will not pray that it pass, but that he be given strength to bear it: have we not the best of all possible authority to ask both blessings? Yes, it is not for such as we are to choose; but may we not well, in all submission to God's Will, with all confidence in God's Goodness, yet pray that our country be not tried unduly, be not tempted beyond her strength?

Charles J. Bonaparte, '71.



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